



Dec 3  
2003

21 F  
Forecast

[Search Yellow Pages](#) | [Search or Browse the Paper](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Advertise With Us](#)

**Click Here  
For This  
Month's Special!**

**Permanent  
Laser Hair  
Removal**

S

#### community news

observer & eccentric  
hometown newspapers  
mirror newspapers  
lansing community newspapers

#### yellow pages

calendar of events

#### classifieds

real estate

#### jobs & careers

internet access

#### specialty publications

equine times  
farmers advance  
women's health style  
home spotlight

**Place A  
Classified Ad**

[about us](#)  
[contact us](#)  
[advertisers with us](#)  
[privacy policy](#)  
[feedback](#)



#### This story first appeared in:

Daily Press and Argus

Sunday, November 30, 2003

#### Living

### County residents celebrate adoption

[Back](#)

Daily Press & Argus

Her name is Mia Celeste - "my star" in Italian.

"You can tell a lot of thought went into that one," said her father, balancing the 5-month-old girl and her bottle.

A lot of thought went into Mia Celeste Watson's name. In fact, a lot of thought went into Mia's adoption before she was even a star in anyone's eye.

When Martin and Lisa Watson of Howell married, they thought their family was complete with Lisa's 10-year-old son, from a former marriage.

"We didn't really think of having other children," said Lisa. "I knew physically I couldn't."

But as their marriage progressed, they realized they did want to have a child together. Both Lisa and Martin were adopted themselves; they naturally turned to adoption.

After deciding on adoption, a family undergoes a home study. This complete overview of a home and family background can be lengthy and can feel invasive, said Martin. An adoption agency isn't looking for wealth, but stability.

Michigan's adoption laws are quite stringent, said Lisa. She and Martin experienced the disappointment of a failed adoption (a case worker called it a "paperwork miscarriage") before they were able to adopt Mia on the day of her birth, June 2.

#### Spotlight



**This Week**

Special Deals from

#### Special



#### Local Resources

[Annual](#)

[Church](#)

[City Government](#)

[County Government](#)

[Library](#)

[Organizations](#)

[Parks & Recreation](#)

[Schools](#)

[State Government](#)

[Township Government](#)

[US Government](#)

Although international adoption is an avenue many families choose, the Martins felt that with many children in the United States who need homes, they should adopt in-country. Mixed-race babies like Mia are hard to place in the United States, they said.

Phyllis Myers, an adoption social worker with Alliance for Adoption in Southfield, said the need for international adoption is also great. In Russia, 100,000 children are relinquished to orphanages each year, she said. Only 10,000 of them are adopted, leaving the orphanage population to grow by 90,000 children per year. Myers and her husband adopted their daughter from Russia.

People adopt children for many reasons - infertility, compassion, the need of the child. Many people are foster parents for years and go on to become adoptive parents.

No matter what the reason, adoptive parents are needed in Michigan.

According to the Michigan Family Independence Agency (FIA), more than 4,000 Michigan children were permanent state wards at the end of 2002.

Nine of those 4,000 children who need families were taken off the list of state wards Tuesday at Livingston County Circuit Court. As part of the first Michigan Adoption Day, nine children were adopted by Livingston County parents this week.

Mary and Dick Haan were foster parents long before adopting Lonnie, 4, and Mariah, 3, a pair of siblings, on Tuesday. The Marion Township couple has raised five natural children already, and Dick is retired, but they fostered Lonnie because they believe every child should have a chance to live. His biological mother was very young when she gave birth, and giving him up gave her an alternative to an abortion.

A few years later, the chance has come for the Haans to fully adopt Lonnie and his sister. Permanency, said Mary, is essential in the life of a child.

"It just seems normal to keep on parenting," said Mary as the children ran around the lobby before their hearing.

"This is the one joyful court hearing," said Adele Stocker, an adoption training consultant. "Permanency and stability is something we all need."

Stocker, a retired case worker with Livingston County FIA, said adoptive families for all age groups are needed in this state. As she spoke, she watched Chief Judge Susan L Reck conduct the adoption hearing for Donna DeRouchie of Gregory to take in natural siblings Nathan, 6, Brandon, 4, and Jasmin, 3, as her own. A single mom, DeRouchie has already adopted four children and fosters one. Kids swarmed over the judge's bench during the hearing; Jasmine sat in Judge Reck's lap.

"There is major help out there," for adoptive families, said DeRouchie as her kids ate cake after the hearing. "You just have to ask. Livingston County Lions Clubs have supported her kids with glasses and she's received medical assistance from the state of Michigan for her adopted children.

While many adoptive parents plan the adoption of one child, others adopt as a natural progression out of being a foster parent.

Devota and Ed Nall of Fenton were foster parents for 16 years, with three natural children, and quite progressed to adopting when the chance came to keep sibling groups together.

"I'm so thankful they can grow up together," said Devota Nall. Although the family is in the process of adopting 8-month-old Faith, they came to the Adoption Day just to be a part of the celebration of families.

[^Top](#)

A banner with a dark blue background and a yellow-to-green gradient. The text "Are you Interested in Yellow Pages Advertising?" is written in a bold, red, sans-serif font with a white outline and a slight shadow effect.

[About Us](#) | [Advertise With Us](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Feedb](#)

Site Developed by HomeTown Digital

Content Copyright © 2003 Hometown Communications N